

und seinem Publikum vertretenen „Allerweltsethik“ (O. Gigon).

Indem Teles Gedanken früherer Autoren und allgemein verbreitete ethische Auffassungen im Rahmen seiner Diatriben reproduziert, befolgt er im Grunde konsequent die kynische Maxime des *χρῶ τοῖς παροῦσι* (Vgl. Teles 10, 6ff.; Philon, De sap. lib. 18; Plutarch, De superst. 170 C). Wie er sein Publikum zur materiellen Genügsamkeit, zur Zufriedenheit und zum Verzicht auf das Streben nach Reichtum auffordert, so begnügt auch er sich intellektuell mit bereits vorliegenden Erkenntnissen und Aussagen früherer Denker. Er ist in dieser Hinsicht ein ἀρκούμενος τοῖς παροῦσι (38, 10–11; 41, 12) und damit wohl auch ein echter Kyniker. Unter diesem Gesichtspunkt findet die Abneigung der Kyniker gegenüber eigener wissenschaftlicher Forschung bei Teles eine quasi-moralische Rechtfertigung. Denn Forschen impliziert das Eingeständnis mangelnder „Autarkie“ und ist daher mit dem Ideal der Selbstgenügsamkeit nicht zu vereinbaren.

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THE THESSALIAN TRICK

Scattered throughout ancient literature there are references to a magical trick variously referred to as *καθαίρειν* (or *κατάγειν*) *τὴν σελήην*, *lunam (de)ducere*, *lunam (de)trahere* etc. It is the purpose of this article to show that such expressions, contrary to the belief of many modern scholars, always suggest the physical removal of the moon down from the sky and were never used to denote eclipse. I shall also discuss some aspects of the history of the treatment of the trick by the Latin poets.

It will be most convenient to start with some extracts from the Scholiast to Apollonius Rhodius, together with a note which is to be found in the Vatican and Bodleian codices of Zenobius:¹⁾

¹⁾ Quoted by Leutsch and Schneidewin (*Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum* I p. 83). Part of it is also quoted and discussed by Professor Dodds in a note on Plato *Gorgias* 513a in his edition of that work (Oxford, 1959).

these passages raise most of the questions relevant to this discussion, and they seem to trace the history of lunar *καθαίρεσις* to before the time of Democritus, earlier than we otherwise know of it.

§ 33 a. ἄστρα τε καὶ μῆνης: τὸν παραδεδομένον μῦθον λέγει ὡς αἱ φαρμακίδες κατὰγουσι τὴν σελήνην. τινὲς δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐκλείψεις ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης καθαιρέσεις ἐκάλουν τῶν θεῶν.

b. τὸ παλαιὸν ὄντο τὰς φαρμακίδας τὴν σελήνην καὶ τὸν ἥλιον καθαιρεῖν. διὸ καὶ μέχρι τῶν Δημοκρίτου χρόνων πολλοὶ τὰς ἐκλείψεις καθαιρέσεις ἐκάλουν. Σωσιφάνης ἐν Μελεάγρῳ·

μάγοις ἐπωδαῖς πᾶσα Θεσσαλὶς κόρη
ψευδὴς σελήνης αἰθέρος καταβάτις.

Schol. ad Apoll. Rhod. 3. § 33

§ 9–61 a. ἡ θαμὰ δὴ καὶ σεῖο: μεμύθενται ὡς ἄρα αἱ φαρμακίδες τὴν σελήνην ταῖς ἐπωδαῖς κατασπῶσι. τοῦτο δὲ ποιεῖν δοκοῦσιν αἱ Θεσσαλαὶ σφαλεῖσαι τῆς ὑπολήψεως· καθὼς Ἀγλαονίκη, Ἡγέμονος θυγάτηρ, ἔμπειρος οὖσα τῆς ἀστρολογίας καὶ εἰδυῖα τὰς ἐκλείψεις τῆς σελήνης, ὁπότε μέλλοι αὐταῖς ἐγγενήσεσθαι, ἔφασκε τὴν θεὸν κατασπᾶν, καὶ παραχρῆμα περιέπιπτε συμφοραῖς, τῶν οἰκείων τινὰ ἀποβαλοῦσα. ὅθεν κατὰ τὸν βίον λέγεται παροιμία ἐπὶ (<...>) τὴν σελήνην κατασπᾶν.

b. μνησαμένη φιλό(τητος): τῆς τοῦ Ἐνδυμίωνος διὰ τῶν σῶν ἐπωδῶν. σκοτίη δὲ ἐν ἀσελήνῳ, διὰ τὴν ἐμὴν περὶ τὸν ἐρώμενον ἀσχολίαν. διαλαμβάνουσι δὲ ἔνιοι τὴν τῆς σελήνης ἐκλειψιν ὑπὸ φαρμακίδων γίνεσθαι καθαιρουμένης, οἱ δὲ παλαιοὶ καθαιρέσεις ἐκάλουν τὰς ἐκλείψεις.

Schol. ad Apoll. Rhod. 4. § 9–61

Ἀσκληπιάδης φησὶ τὰς Θετταλὰς ἐκμαθούσας τὰς τῆς σελήνης κινήσεις προαγγέλλειν ὡς ὑπ' αὐτῶν μέλλοι κατάγεσθαι, τοῦτο δὲ πράττειν οὐ χωρὶς τῆς αὐτῶν κακώσεως· ἢ γὰρ καταθύνει τῶν τέκνων ἢ τὸν ἕτερον τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπολλύειν. λέγεται γοῦν ἐπὶ τῶν κακὰ ποριζομένων Δοῦρις δὲ φησιν ἀστρολόγον προαγορεύοντα τὰς τῆς σελήνης ἐκλείψεις οὐκ εὖ ἀπαλλάξαι.

Schol. ad Zenobius *Epitome* 401

I offer the following translations:

§ 33 a ἄστρα τε καὶ μῆνης: he refers to the traditional myth, according to which witches bring down the moon. And some, in fact, used to call eclipses of the sun and moon “kathaireses” of the gods.

b. In antiquity they used to think that witches drew down the moon and the sun. Accordingly, even up to the time of Democritus, many people used to call eclipses “kathaireses”. Sosiphanes, in the *Meleager* says:

Every Thessalian maiden with magic songs
[is] a false bringer-down of the moon from the sky.

59-61 a. ἡ θαμὰ δὴ καὶ σεῖο: The myth runs that witches pull down the moon with their songs. Thessalian ones are reputed to do this although they have [always] been let down in their expectations [sc. of the trick]. Accordingly, Aglaonice, the daughter of Hegemon, being skilled in astronomy, and knowing the eclipses of the moon, whenever it [the moon] was going to be involved with them [eclipses] used to say that she was drawing down the goddess, and immediately used to fall into calamities, losing one of her household. Whence it is from her life that the proverb is told, “On ... [one?] draws down the moon.”

b. μνησαμένη φιλότητος: [remembering] the [love] of Endymion because of your songs. σκοτίη: In moonless [dark] because of my being busy with my beloved. Some people suppose that eclipse of the moon is caused by its being brought down by witches, and the ancients used to call eclipses “kathaireses”.

Asclepiades says that Thessalian women learnt the movements of the moon and announced that it was going to be brought down by them; and they did this not without their own hurt. For, indeed, they either sacrificed one of their own children or lost one of their eyes. The proverb [ἐπὶ παντὶ τὴν σελήνην καθαιρεῖς] is, accordingly, said of those bringing evils upon themselves. But Douris says that an astronomer who foretells eclipses of the moon does not come off well.

Two problems emerge from all this. What, exactly, did the witches do, and what precisely was suggested by the expression *σελήνην καθαιρεῖν*?

The plain meaning of most of these comments, and of the passage from Sosiphanes, is that Thessalian witches drew the moon down to earth. This, as I shall hope to show, is consistently the picture intended whenever the trick is referred to in classical literature.

Confusion has, however, arisen from a desire to provide a rational explanation of the trick; evidence for such a desire is to be seen both in the Scholiast to Apollonius Rhodius and in

Asclepiades as quoted in the note on Zenobius. Their explanation is, essentially, that the witches learnt how to predict eclipses and then announced that they would draw down the moon only when they knew that an eclipse was about to occur. As far as I have been able to discover, this theory to explain the Thessalian trick occurs only in these two passages and twice in Plutarch²⁾ who, on both occasions, refers the method to Aglaonice, the witch cited by the Scholiast. It is not, in any case, a convincing theory. It is most unlikely that primitive witches could predict eclipses with sufficient accuracy;³⁾ and, even if they could, total or near total lunar eclipse occurs in any given place only about once every three years, while we know from Martial that the sleep of Rome was constantly disturbed by the cymbals of those who purported to bring back the moon after the Thessalians had begun their tricks:

numerare pigri damna qui potest somni,
dicet quot aera uerberent manus urbis
cum secta Colcho luna uapulat rhombo.

Martial 12. 57. 15-17

The Thessalians⁴⁾ must surely have had more frequent success than would be afforded by genuine eclipse for anyone to be

2) *Moralia* 145 and 416-17.

3) According to Professor Guthrie (*A History of Greek Philosophy* i 47-49) the astronomical skills even of the Babylonians and of Thales have been much exaggerated, and in particular their ability to predict eclipses.

4) There is a vase, formerly in the collection of Sir William Hamilton, which may be of some value in this connexion. It portrays two naked women and between them is a medallion with a female head upon it, apparently being drawn down to earth. According to Tischbein (*Engravings from the Ancient Vases of Sir William Hamilton*, 1791, 3. 44) who was the first to report the vase, the scene refers to women about to fight before the image of Diana Taurica. Such an interpretation, however, seems to pay no attention to the inscription κλῦθι πότνια σελήνη, an inscription which led Lenormant and de Witte (*Élite des Monuments Céramographiques*, Paris, 1857, II 389-90) to relate the vase to lunar καθάαρσις. This view is followed by Dilthey (*Rb. Mus.* 27 [1872] 389-90) and Roscher (*Lex.* II ii s. v. 'Mondgöttin' 3166) and must surely be right. If so, it lends support to the view that καθάαρσις does indeed involve drawing down. There is a representation of the vase in Tischbein, in Lenormant and de Witte, and in Roscher, also in Eduard Gerhard, *Gesammelte akademische Abhandlungen und kleine Schriften*, Berlin, 1866, figure 8. 8. I have been able to find no information on where the vase is now, or on its date and provenance. I should like to express my appreciation for the help afforded me on this vase by Dr Ann Birchell of the British Museum.

persuaded of the need for such frequent use of the cymbals. Furthermore, *secta* does suggest that something has happened (or has seemed to have happened) to the moon, something that the cymbals seem to put right. We know from Hippolytus (*Ref. Haer.* 4. 37) that those who wished to perform the trick of drawing the moon did so by means of elaborate devices involving candles, mirrors and pulleys by which they projected an image of the moon above their audience and then drew the image down. Sometimes, apparently, this was done inside, sometimes in the open air. In either case, however, the trick must have been tried only on moonless or cloudy nights; otherwise, the audience could have pointed to the moon in the sky and convicted the practitioner of fraud. The nights of which Martial is complaining were obviously neither moonless nor heavily overcast; the moon could, after all, be seen. On such nights the Thessalian trick could not be performed. If, however, the credulous could be persuaded that it was only because of the work of the cymbals that the moon was remaining stable then the stock of both sets of charlatans would rise. Every time a cloud slightly obscured the moon (*secta*), the cymbal players would redouble their efforts and, when the cloud went, would claim the credit. In this way faith would be strengthened both in the power of the cymbals to defend the moon and in the power of the witches to draw it down. All this is my reconstruction, but I can see no other way to account for the facts we have.

The second problem arising out of the scholiasts' comments is the precise significance of the term *καθαίρεσις*. The line in Apollonius on which the first passages comment runs as follows:

ἄστρα τε καὶ μήνης ἱερῆς ἐπέδησε κελεύθους
she checks the stars and the paths of the sacred moon.

The scholiast's first comment is that this refers to a myth according to which witches bring down the moon. He then goes on to say that some men used to call eclipses *καθαιρέσεις*. Why is such a comment relevant? No one has so far said anything about eclipse or *καθαίρεσις*. Apollonius is certainly not referring to eclipse since the stars cannot suffer eclipse;⁵⁾ the scholiast cannot

5) As a matter of fact, Apollonius is probably not referring to the Thessalian trick either, but to a trick which involves the cessation or regression of all the heavenly bodies. Professor Vian, in his note on this passage (Apollonius de Rhodes *Argonautiques* III, Paris, 1961), aptly compares Vergil's *sistere aquas fluminis et uertere sidera retro* (*Aeneid* 4. 489) but I

suppose that he is referring to eclipse, partly because his note uses *κατάγειν* which was never associated with eclipse, and partly because he includes *ἄστροα* in his lemma. If the statement that certain people used to call eclipses *καθαίρεσεις* has any point here, it can only be to illustrate how widespread was the belief in the powers of Thessalian witches, not to offer an old-fashioned term for eclipse. The scholiast is suggesting that belief in the Thessalian witches was so common that eclipse was sometimes mistaken for Thessalian *καθαίρεσεις*. When an eclipse occurred, the believers would cry out, “*ἡ σελήνη καθαίρεῖται*”, or some such thing, which they meant quite literally, “The moon is being brought down” since that is what they thought was going on. Observers who could recognize an eclipse would, however, say of such people, “*καλοῦσι τὰς ἐκλείψεις καθαίρεσεις*”.⁶⁾ This does not

cannot agree with his suggestion that the scholiast sees a reference to a magical ability to provoke eclipse. An interesting parallel for the scholiast's confusion of the cessation trick and the Thessalian trick is to be found in Seneca where a similar stopping of the heavens is wrongly (and oddly) attributed to the workings of the Thessalian trick – it was, in fact, the sight of the beautiful Hippolytus that had stopped the moon in her tracks:

aut te [sc. Hippolytum] stellifero despicens polo
sidus post ueteres Arcadas editum
currus non poterit flectere candidos.
et nuper rubuit, nullaque lucidis
nubes sordidior uultibus obstitit;
at nos solliciti numine turbido,
tractam Thessalicis carminibus rati,
tinnitus dedimus: tu fueras labor
et tu causa morae, te dea noctium
dum spectat celeres sustinuit uias.

Seneca *Phaedra* 785–94

- 6) Just such an incident is reported by Claudian:
terrītat adsiduis lunae labor atraque Phoebe
noctibus aerisonis crebris ululata per urbes.
nec credunt uetito fraudatam sole sororem
telluris subeunte globo, sed castra secutas
barbara Thessalidas patriis lunare uenenis
incestare iubar.

Claudian *de Bello Gothico* 233–38

I assume that a similar explanation lies behind the following passage from the elder Pliny, though he need not necessarily be referring to the Thessalian trick at all:

inuēta iampridem ratio est praenuntians horas, non modo dies ac
noctes, solis lunaeque defectuum. durat tamen tradita persuasio in
magna parte uulgi ueneficiis et herbis id cogi eamque unam feminarum
scientiam praeualere.

Pliny *N.H.* 25. 5. 10

suggest that anyone ever used *καθαίρεσις* when eclipse was what he had in mind – rather that he would say and mean *καθαίρεσις* when eclipse was what was actually going on. Understood that way, the scholiast's comment becomes entirely coherent, meaning essentially, "This is a reference to the traditional belief in the witches' power to draw down the moon. Why, some people used to assume that it was Thessalian *καθαίρεσις* they were witnessing even when it was, in fact, eclipse; (so you can see how widespread the belief was)."

The same explanation surely lies behind the suggestion in the b scholiast that *καθαίρεσις* was used for "eclipse" up to the time of Democritus. The suggestion, introduced as it is by *διό*, is specifically intended to illustrate the previous sentence, which asserts that there had been a belief in the power of Thessalian women to perform lunar *καθαίρεσις*. The suggestion is followed by a quotation from Sosiphanes whose use of *καταβάτις* must imply that the Thessalian claim was indeed to "draw down" the moon. Evidence that belief in the Thessalian trick was so widespread that even eclipses were sometimes mistaken for it, would form part of a natural progression of thought; whereas, any reference to an antique term for eclipse would be entirely out of place, especially since the term in question occurs neither in the Apollonius passage nor in the quotation from Sosiphanes.

The last passage relevant here, the b scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius 4. 59–61, is also, at first sight, a statement that *καθαίρεσις* was an antique term for eclipse. Here again, however, the context precludes such an interpretation. Apollonius is certainly referring to a trick which draws the moon down; the scholiast is commenting on *μνησαμένη φιλότητος* which is, as the scholiast himself points out, a reference to the moon's visit to Endymion, the very phrase that most obviously demands descent and not eclipse. Any discussion of terms for eclipse is again quite inappropriate; there is, however, every reason for the scholiast to provide evidence for the widespread belief in the Thessalians' power, and his last sentence provides that evidence in just the way that it was provided by the similar passages in the earlier notes.

It is, however, not only improbable on logical, internal grounds that the scholiast was claiming that *καθαίρεσις* was ever a term for eclipse – it is highly unlikely that the word could, in fact, ever have borne such a meaning. The word must suggest

“pulling down”,⁷⁾ and a moon in eclipse does not in any way give the impression that it is being pulled down. Nevertheless, many modern scholars do associate *καθαίρεσις* with eclipse. Professor Mugler,⁸⁾ for instance, refers the expression *σελήνην καθαιρεῖν* to the Homeric *ὅσσε καθαιρεῖν* and *ὀφθαλμονὸς καθαιρεῖν* used of the ritual closing of a dead man’s eyes. He admits that these expressions must arise from the notion of drawing down the eye-lid, but assumes that later they lost their sense of drawing down and came to be thought of merely as terms for closing the eye. His hypothesis continues by assuming that *καθαιρεῖν* then came to be used of the extinguishing of the light of any heavenly body by analogy with his notion of the development of the Homeric expressions. At a still later date, we are asked to suppose, the downward motion implicit in the term *καθαιρεῖν* was suddenly recalled and gave rise to an ignorant assumption that lunar *καθαίρεσις* involved more than extinguishing the light of the moon, it suggested bringing it down to earth. The only passage from literature where Professor Mugler claims to see certain evidence of the “true” meaning of *σελήνην καθαιρεῖν*, to “darken” the moon and not to draw it down, is in Plutarch. The passage in question⁹⁾ relates how Aglaonice deceives the superstitious by claiming, herself, to *καθαιρεῖν* the moon, although in fact, she has merely learnt enough astronomy to be able to predict an eclipse, while her audience is too ignorant to know anything of the workings of eclipse and assumes that she caused the phenomenon. If this were the only place where Plutarch told the story it would be impossible to refute absolutely Professor Mugler’s assumption that, by the term *καθαιρεῖν*, Aglaonice claims only to darken the moon and that the sole point of the trick was that she predicted the darkening from her skill in astronomy while her audience thought she had caused it. It would, however, be perfectly reasonable to assume that when Aglaonice claims to be able to perform lunar *καθαίρεσις* she is claiming to be able to draw the moon down, although all that actually happens is that an eclipse occurs. That that is the sense that Plutarch intends is surely proved by an examination of the second passage where he tells the story of Aglaonice, a passage which seems not to have been noticed by Professor Mugler:

7) Cf. *LSJ* s. v. *καθαίρω*.

8) *REA* 61 (1959) 48–56.

9) *Moralia* 145.

... ἢ πάντα φύρειν ἅμα καὶ ταράττειν ἀναγκάζουσιν ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἀνθρωπίνοις πάθεσι καὶ πράγμασι τὸν θεὸν ἐμβιβάζοντας καὶ κατασπῶντας ἐπὶ τὰς χρείας, ὥσπερ αἱ Θετταλαὶ λέγονται τὴν σελήνην. ἀλλ' ἐκείνων μὲν ἐν γυναιξὶ τὸ πανοῦργον ἔσχε πίστιν Ἀγλαονίκης τῆς Ἡγήτορος, ὡς φασιν, ἀστρολογικῆς γυναικὸς ἐν ἐκλείψει σελήνης αἰεὶ προσποιουμένης γοητεύειν καὶ καθαίρειν αὐτήν.

Plutarch *Mor.* 416–17

... or else they force us to a disorderly confusion of all things, in which we bring the god into men's emotions and activities, drawing him down to our needs, as the women of Thessaly are said to draw down the moon. This cunning deceit of theirs, however, gained credence among women when the daughter of Hegetor, Aglaonice, who was skilled in astronomy, always pretended at the time of an eclipse of the moon that she was bewitching it and bringing it down.¹⁰⁾

For Plutarch, then, lunar *καθαίρεσις* must involve bringing the moon down to earth.

Professor Mugler is not, however, alone in assuming that *καθαίρεσις* involves eclipse. Professor Dodds, for instance, in his note on Plato *Gorgias* 513a comments on *τὴν σελήνην καθαιρούσας* thus:

"pulling down the moon", i.e. causing an eclipse, the typical feat ascribed to Thessalian witches (*Clouds* 749f., Hor. *Epodes* 5. 45 f., Lucan *Phars.* 6. 499 ff.).

As I shall show in due course, the passages cited cannot by any stretch of the imagination support the view that the Thessalian trick was to "cause an eclipse", nor, I believe, is there any good reason for supposing that this was ever an ancient view.¹¹⁾

I shall now attempt to trace the history of the literary appearances of this trick with comment where appropriate. In many cases the interpretation is not, and never has been, in

10) This is Babbitt's translation from his Loeb edition, London, 1928.

11) Nevertheless, there are many others who share this view of the Thessalian trick. As well as Professor Mugler there is Roscher (*loc. cit.* 3164–65), Miller in his notes in the Loeb editions of Ovid *Met.* 7. 207–8 and of Seneca *Medea* 787–96, Ker in the Loeb edition and Bornecque in the Budé edition of Ovid *Rem. Am.* 258, and Mooney in his note on Apollonius Rhodius 3. 533, though this last is, in fact, only a misleading translation of part of the scholiast discussed above. No doubt, witches did sometimes take advantage of eclipse in connexion with their trick and such an event may well have given rise to the story of Aglaonice. I cannot, however, believe that eclipse was normally associated with the trick.

doubt: the witch is said to be able to draw the moon down to earth and that is all there is to it. Sometimes, however, the presentation is more subtle and has led to misunderstanding. A much clearer view of such passages will, I think, emerge from a careful study of all instances of the trick in literature.

The earliest extant reference to the Thessalian trick is to be found in Aristophanes:

Στ. γυναικα φαρμακίδ' εἰ προιάμενος Θετταλήν
καθέλοιμι νύκτωρ τήν σελήνην, εἴτα δὴ
αὐτὴν καθείρξαμι ἔς λοφεῖον στρογγύλον,
ὥσπερ κάτοπτρον, κἄτα τηροίην ἔχων –

Σω. τί δῆτα τοῦτ' ἂν ὠφελήσειέν σ' ; Στ. ὃ τι;
εἰ μηκέτ' ἀνατέλλοι σελήνην μηδαμοῦ,
οὐκ ἂν ἀποδοίην τοὺς τόκους.

Aristophanes *Clouds* 749–55

This is Strepsiades' ingenious plan to escape the monthly interest on his debts by suborning a Thessalian woman to bring the moon down and lock it up in a case so that it will not rise again and mark the beginning of the next month. There can be no doubt that the sense of *καθέλοιμι* here is of bringing the moon down.¹²⁾

The next reference to the Thessalian trick is in Plato's *Gorgias*; this is one of many passages which refer to the trick but give absolutely no indication of what is meant by it.¹³⁾ Socrates, advising Callicles not to seize power in a way likely to redound to his disadvantage, refers to the proverbial disasters that attend Thessalian witches whenever they have exercised their powers:

τοῦθ' ὄρα εἰ σοὶ λυσιτελεῖ καὶ ἐμοί, ὅπως μὴ, ὦ δαιμόνιε,
πεισόμεθα ὑπερ φασὶ τὰς τὴν σελήνην καθαιρούσας, τὰς Θετταλίδας.

Plato *Gorgias* 513a

The proper understanding of this passage depends in no way on

12) It is strange indeed that Professor Dodds chose this passage to illustrate his view that the Thessalian trick involves eclipse. Professor Mugler believes that Aristophanes is deliberately attributing a misuse of the word *καθαγεῖν* to Strepsiades, a misuse that will be recognized by the audience and make them laugh at him.

13) E.g. Petronius *Satyricon* 129; 134. 10; Pliny *N.H.* 30. 2. 7; Lucian *Dial. Meretr.* 1. 281; Zenobius 4. 1; Ps-Plutarch *Prov. Alex.* 2. 13; Claudian *in Ruf.* 1. 146–47; *Suda* s.v. ἐπὶ σαντῶ.

a correct appreciation of the workings of the Thessalian trick; in the complete absence of internal evidence it would, however, seem most natural to understand it in the way that it was presented by Aristophanes rather than to assume, with Professor Dodds, that it involves the magical production of eclipse, a theory for which there seems to be no evidence.

The last mention of the lunar trick before the Hellenistic period is to be found in the Hippocratic corpus. This is the text as it appears in the Loeb edition of W. H. S. Jones:

εἰ γὰρ σελήνην καθαιρεῖν καὶ ἥλιον ἀφανίζειν καὶ χειμῶνά τε καὶ εὐδίην ποιεῖν καὶ ὄμβρους καὶ ἀνέμους καὶ θάλασσαν ἄπορον καὶ γῆν ἄφορον καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ τοιοῦτότροπα πάντα ὑποδέχονται ἐπίστασθαι ... εἰ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος μαγεύων καὶ θύων σελήνην καθαιρήσει καὶ ἥλιον ἀφανίει καὶ χειμῶνα καὶ εὐδίην ποιήσει ...

Hippocrates *de Morbo Sacro* 4

Here we have two lists of miraculous powers allegedly claimed by magicians. Both lists include lunar *καθαίρεσις*¹⁴⁾ which Jones translates "bringing down the moon". There is, surely, no reason to question that rendering. However, when Jones goes on to give "eclipse the sun" for *ἥλιον ἀφανίζειν*, the reader is reasonably perplexed. *ἀφανίζειν* is no more a technical term for eclipse than is *καθαίρειν*. The word means, "make to vanish" and is well illustrated by a passage in Xenophon:

ἥλιον δὲ νεφέλην προκαλύψασα ἠφάνισε.

Xenophon *Anab.* 3. 4. 8.¹⁵⁾

If the Hippocratic writer had believed that the witches claimed to produce eclipses, why did he not say so? He seems to be suggesting that their claim was to be able to draw the moon down and to make the sun vanish. There is no reason to imagine that there is, in either case, an obscure allusion to an ability to engineer eclipse.

14) As a matter of fact, *Vindobonensis Med.* IV, one of our earliest and best manuscripts, offers *κατάγειν* in the first list, and this was the reading preferred by Wilamowitz.

15) The apparently nonsensical version of this passage offered by the manuscripts, *ἥλιος δὲ νεφέλην προκαλύψας ἠφάνισε*, is emended in the obvious way by almost all editors. It can, in any case, hardly conceal a reference to eclipse. For magicians who "make the sun vanish", cf. Ovid *Her.* 6. 86; *Rem. Am.* 256; *Met.* 7. 208-9.

Apollonius Rhodius is the next authority for the magical calling down of the moon. Two passages from the *Argonautica* are commonly cited in this connexion, the two passages whose scholia begin this article. Of these, as we have seen, the first (3. 528–533) is probably not referring to the Thessalian trick at all, but to a magically induced cessation or regression of the heavenly bodies; it is, in any case, not referring to eclipse because of the association of *ἄστροα* with the trick. The second passage certainly does involve calling the moon down to earth:

οὐκ ἄρ' ἐγὼ μούνη μετὰ Λάτμιον ἄντρον ἀλύσκω
οὐδ' οἴη καλῶ περιδαίομαι Ἐνδυμίωνι·
ἦ θαμὰ δὴ καὶ σεῖο κίον δολίησιν ἀοιδαῖς,
μνησαμένη φίλοτης, ἵνα σκοτίῃ ἐνὶ νυκτὶ
φαρμάσσης εὐκῆλος, ἃ τοι φίλα ἔργα τέτυκται.

Apollonius Rhodius 4. 57–61

The moon is reflecting on the number of times she has been called down to her love, Endymion, by the incantations of Medea. But a new stress is also introduced, the dark night that the trick will produce – that, in fact, is why Medea called the moon down in the first place – she wanted dark nights to assist her sorcery. For the first time, then, we have a reference to the darkness that will inevitably follow the successful performance of the Thessalian trick.

For the next phase in the history of the literary treatment of the Thessalian trick we must turn to the Latin poets.¹⁶⁾ At first, the trick is represented much as it was in the Greek writers, as an example of magic, frequently with little or no attention paid to the question of how precisely it is to be viewed. However, in the absence of other indications, the verbs chosen (*deducere*, *deripere*, *descendere*) must surely suggest downward physical motion. The references to the trick in early Augustan literature are, then, as follows:

carmina uel caelo possunt deducere lunam,
carminibus Circe socios mutauit Vlixi,
frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis.

Vergil *Eclogues* 8. 69–71¹⁷⁾

¹⁶⁾ According to Pliny (*N.H.* 30. 2. 7) there was a play by Menander on the subject, entitled *Thessala*, but nothing of immediate interest survives.

¹⁷⁾ Vergil also thinks that Pan could draw the moon down to earth.

quae sidera excantata uoce Thessala
lunamque caelo deripit.

Horace *Epodes* 5. 45-46

This passage, like Apollonius Rhodius 3. 533, cannot possibly refer to eclipse because the stars and moon are said to suffer the same fate, and there is no such thing as eclipse of the stars. Professor Dodds was, therefore, particularly unlucky in choosing this passage to illustrate his belief that the Thessalian trick involved "causing an eclipse".

et polo
deripere lunam uocibus possem meis.

Horace *Epodes* 17. 77-78

at uos deductae quibus est fallacia lunae

Propertius 1. 1. 19¹⁸)

et iam luna negat totiens descendere caelo

Propertius 2. 28. 37.

This last line appears in a list of magical processes said to be failing.¹⁹)

With Tibullus, downward movement (*deducere*) is still implied but a new element, destined to recur frequently, is for the first time introduced – the use of cymbals to restore or, as here, sustain the moon against the attacks of magic:

cantus et e curru lunam deducere temptat,
et faceret, si non aera repulsa sonent.

Tibullus 1, 8. 21-22

Pan deus Arcadiae captam te, Luna, fefellit
in nemora alta uocans; nec te aspernata uocantem.

Georgics 3. 392-93

18) Housman (*J. Phil.* 16 [1888] 25-27) has a very full discussion of this line where he wanted to read *pellacia*; he has been answered by Dr Shackleton Bailey (*CQ* 43 [1949] 22). Neither scholar supposed that Propertius had anything in mind other than drawing the moon down to earth.

19) There are several Senecan passages which, similarly, stress descent: *Herc. Oet.* 467-68, 523-25; *Phaedra* 420-22. Martial refers to the trick twice; once in the passage cited above, where he complains about the noise of the cymbals, and once in a more direct way:

quae nunc Thessalico lunam deducere rhombo,
quae sciet hos illos uendere lena toros?

9. 29. 9-10

There can be no doubt that the apotropaic power of cymbals was especially associated with eclipse (cf. e. g. Livy 26. 5. 9; Pliny *N.H.* 2. 9. 54; Tacitus *Annals* 1. 28; Juvenal 6. 442; Claudian *de Bello Gothico* 233-34) but it is also true that its use is by no means confined to eclipse and it seems to have been thought useful against any magic, (cf. Theocritus *Idyll* 2. 36 and Gow's very full discussion). As a matter of fact, this is not one of the passages that has attracted the eye of those who wish to associate the Thessalian trick with eclipse, despite the temptation that might well have arisen from the presence of the cymbals. As far as I know, this passage has never been explained in terms of eclipse.

The treatment accorded this subject by Ovid is not significantly different from that of his predecessors:

me duce non tumultu prodire iubebitur umbra,
non anus infami carmine rumpet humum,
non seges ex aliis alios transibit in agros,
nec subito Phoebi pallidus orbis erit.
ut solet aequoreas ibit Tiberinus in undas;
ut solet, in niueis luna uehetur equis.

Ovid *Remedia Amoris* 253-58

carmina sanguineae deducunt cornua lunae,
et reuocant niueos solis euntis equos.

In both Martial references the trick is associated with the *rhombus*. Both the iunx and the *rhombus* were devices of attraction, which is one more reason for supposing that attraction is what Martial had in mind. For a full discussion of the *rhombus* cf. Gow (*JHS* 54 [1934] 1-13). Two other passages ought, in the interests of thoroughness, to be referred to in this context. Neither, however, need necessarily be referring to the trick, the former is too vague to be useful, the latter too imprecise:

audax cantatae leges imponere lunae.
Propertius 4. 5. 13
uideo Triuiæ currus agiles,
non quos pleno lucida uultu
pernox agitat, sed quos facie
lurida maesta, cum Thessalicis
uexata minis caelum freno
propiore legit, sic face tristem
pallida lucem funde per auras,
horrore nouo terre populos
inque auxilium, Dictynna, tuum
pretiosa sonent aera Corinthi.

Seneca *Medea* 787-96

carmine dissiliunt abruptis faucibus angues,
inque suos fontes uersa recurrit aqua.

Ovid *Amores* 2. 1. 23-26

It is not, of course, hard to see the influence of Apollonius Rhodius (3. 528-33) and Vergil (*Eclogues* 8. 69-71) on these first passages while Tibullus, with his reference to cymbals, may well have been in Ovid's mind when he wrote the next passage:²⁰⁾

te quoque, luna, traho, quamuis Temesaea labores
aera tuos minuant; currus quoque carmine nostro
pallet aui [sc. Solis].

Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7. 207-9

There are two other Ovidian references to the trick and they too stress downward motion:

illa reluctantem cursu deducere lunam
nititur et tenebris abdere solis equos.

Ovid *Heroides* 6. 85-86

mater erat Mycale, quam deduxisse canendo
saepe reluctantis constabat cornua lunae.

Ovid *Metamorphoses* 12. 263-64

Two further Ovidian passages should, perhaps, be considered here:

at illi

conscia purpureus uenit in ora pudor,
quale coloratum Tithoni coniuge caelum
subrubet aut sponso uisa puella nouo,
quale rosae fulgent inter sua lilia mixtae,
aut ubi cantatis luna laborat equis.

Ovid *Amores* 2. 5. 33-38

sed et erubuisse decebat:

hic color aprica pendentibus arbore pomis
aut ebori tincto est aut sub candore rubenti,
cum frustra resonant aera auxiliaria, lunae.

Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4. 330-33

20) Bornecque, however, in his note on *Rem. Am.* 253-58 in his Budé edition writes, "Ovide pense aux éclipses de lune", while Miller, in his note on *Met.* 7. 207-9 in his Loeb edition, says, "At an eclipse it was usual to make a noise in order to frighten away the malignant influence". Though this is true, it surely suggests a misunderstanding of this particular passage. Those who feel that *lunae labores* must necessarily refer to eclipse should refer to Lucan *Phars.* 6. 505.

These two blushing similes are quite different from Ovid's treatment of the Thessalian trick. They do not appear in magical contexts, there is no word for descent, no mention of Thessaly or witches. Both, surely, are references to lunar eclipse; the *cantatis* of the *Amores* passage certainly reflects a notion that eclipse is, or can be, magically induced – but that is not to say that the Thessalian trick is an example of magically induced eclipse. The real importance of these passages for our purposes will appear later in the discussion of Statius *Thebaid* 1. 104–6.

Lucan is our next authority for the Thessalian trick:

illis et sidera primum
praecipiti deducta polo, Phoebique serena
non aliter diris uerborum obsessa uenenis
palluit et nigris terrenisque ignibus arsit,
quam si fraterna prohiberet imagine tellus
insereretque suas flammis caelestibus umbras;
et patitur tantos cantu depressa labores
donec suppositas propior despumet in herbas.

Lucan *Pharsalia* 6. 499–506

Here, the comparison between the appearance of the Thessalian trick and that of eclipse, which was implicit in Tibullus, is made explicit. Our attention is drawn first to the sky where the light of the moon grows dim and then to earth where the descended moon gives up her magical juices. Both the explicit comparison with the appearance of eclipse and the stress on the witches' possession of the moon make it abundantly plain that in Lucan's mind the eclipse and the Thessalian trick are two different things. Reference to the extraction of magical juices from the moon appear in three later accounts of the Thessalian trick (Valerius Flaccus *Argonautica* 6. 445–48; Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 1. 3; Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 36. 344–49)²¹ where the stress is obviously on the descent of the moon from the sky to the earth.²²

21) It may also occur in Statius' *Thebaid* if we accept the reading of *Puteaneus*:

astrorumque uices numerataque semina lunae
Thessalicumque nefas.

Thebaid 3. 558–59.

22) This passage from Lucan is the third and last chosen by Professor Dodds to illustrate his view of the Thessalian trick. It is, again, a most unlucky choice.

We now encounter a simile in Statius' *Thebaid* which is, at first sight, a problem. The red in the eye of Tisiphone is likened to the red of the Thessalian trick:

sedet intus abactis
ferrea lux oculis, qualis per nubila Phoebe
Atracia rubet arte labor.²³)

Statius *Thebaid* 1. 104-6

This passage is clearly based on Ovid's two blushing similes quoted above, both of which refer to eclipse and depend for their effect on the well known reddening of the moon in the early stages of eclipse. *Atracia ... arte*, however, makes it plain that Statius does have the Thessalian trick in mind. Does he, then, suppose that the Thessalian trick involves eclipse? Lactantius certainly did not think so:

talis erat lux illi, qualis est luna, cum laborat magica arte.
nam pagani magicis artibus credebant lunam posse mutari. unde Vergilius 'carmina uel lunam caelo deducere possunt'.

Such was her light as is the moon when it fails because of magic skill. For the rustics used to believe that the moon could be moved by magic skills. Hence Vergil: 'songs can draw down even the moon from heaven'.

Neither the explanation nor the parallel suggest that Lactantius had eclipse in mind, and Lactantius was surely right. Statius has indeed borrowed Ovid's similes; but he has also borrowed Lucan's idea that eclipse and Thessalian trick would somehow resemble each other. He can thus use the Thessalian trick in a simile where his model used eclipse. And this is done for a purpose. Ovid was describing the shy blush of a young girl and the shy blush of a youth – Statius is describing the bloodshot eye of the Fury, Tisiphone, so that it is altogether appropriate that he should introduce that note of awe and horror associated with Thessalian witches, an association that would in no way have suited Ovid's contexts. That this is Statius' view of the Thessalian trick is further confirmed by the simile at *Thebaid* 6. 685-88 and by the comments of Lactantius.

We shall probably never know the precise origins of the

²³) This is no place to discuss the crux here between *labor* and *color* which does not, in any case, affect the issue. As I have observed above on Ovid *Metamorphoses* 7. 207 (foot-note 20), *labor* need not necessarily suggest eclipse.

tradition of the Thessalian trick. Perhaps it arose from stories of an epiphany of Selene, the goddess, as described by Lucian (*Philops.* 14) and by Apuleius (*Apol.* 31). Perhaps it came to Greece from India. Verrier Elwin (*Myths of Middle India*, Madras, 1949, p. 69) reports a number of Indian myths in which the sun or moon are said to be held as sureties for a debt, so that it may not be coincidental that our earliest classical reference to the Thessalian trick (Aristophanes *Clouds* 749–52) is also associated with debt while our last classical reference (Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 36. 344–49) attributes the trick to brahmins. But, whatever the origins of the tradition may have been, it does seem to have been well known throughout antiquity, and, despite the comments of modern commentators, the trick seems never to have become a dead image for denoting eclipse but to have retained its associations with the very special claims of Thessalian witches to be able to draw the moon down to earth.²⁴⁾

Cardiff

D. E. Hill

ZU EINEM ALTRÖMISCHEN OPFERRITUAL

(Cato de agricultura c. 141)*

Cato hat uns in seinem Buch über die Landwirtschaft in c. 141 das religionsgeschichtlich so hoch interessante Dokument der *lustratio agri* hinterlassen. Es ist das die zeitlich erste und älteste Erwähnung des Ambarvalienfestes, das im Frühling gefeiert wurde. Noch wichtiger als diese Tatsache ist jedoch die genaue Schilderung des Zeremoniells und Angabe der vorgeschriebenen Gebete.

Daß Cato auf den Vorschriften älterer Ritualbücher basiert,

24) An earlier draft of this paper was read by my friend and former colleague, Professor William M. Sale; it owes much to his searching criticisms and helpful suggestions.

*) Vortrag, gehalten vor dem Eranos Vindobonensis am 23. Nov. 1972.